9 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces are made of plastics.

10 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the radiation absorbing material is a radiation absorbing dye.

11 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the lower limit of the absorption band is above 700nm.

13 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the absorption band defines the range 820-860nm.

14 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the absorption band lies in the infrared range.

15 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the absorption band does not include the range 400-700nm.

16 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the radiation is in the infrared range.

17 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the wavelength of the incident radiation lies in the range 700-2500nm.

20 (amended). A method according to claim 1, wherein the radiation is a laser beam.

21 (amended). A pair of workpieces which have been welded by a method according to claim 1.

Add the following claims:

22. A method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces comprise fabrics.

23. A method according to claim 22, wherein the fabrics are nylon-based fabrics.

24. A method according to claim 22, wherein the fabrics are polyurethane coated.

25. A method according to claim 22, wherein the fabrics comprise polyamide/polytetrafluoroethylene laminated fabrics.

26. A method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces comprise thin films such as polyester or PEEK.

27. A method according to claim 9, wherein the workpieces are made of thermoplastic.